

STANDARDIZING
RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION
AS A
NEW PROFESSION



A STATEMENT *of the* ACADEMIC
STANDARDS *of* BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL *of* RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
and SOCIAL SERVICE

Religious Education Is a New Profession

FOUR factors are involved in every profession; viz.: (1) a definite and *permanent human need*; (2) a well defined *body of knowledge* appertaining to the permanent human need; (3) *tools, instruments or specialized technique* by which bodies of knowledge are applied to permanent human needs; and (4) *skill* in the application of technique to special knowledge.

Few would deny that religious education is a vital and permanent human need. Theology, philosophy, metaphysics, psychology, history of religion, ethics, sociology and the biological sciences have already contributed bodies of knowledge essential to religious education. During the past two decades there has developed a well defined body of knowledge regarding the development of religion in children and adults, and of pedagogical methods of teaching religion. A very definite technique is being formulated; scales, score-cards and standards of measurement have been created and standardized for the purpose of measuring the factors involved in religious education and the processes of religious growth. Already literally thousands of persons are employed as experts in the application of this specialized knowledge to the spiritual needs of human beings. Almost without our knowing it, a new profession, equipped with all the elements necessary for professional service, has sprung, Minerva-like, into existence.

The new profession is here. The question is: shall the graduate schools of the land standardize this new profession and make its practice safe and trustworthy?

Shall the New Profession Have Its Own Professional Degrees?

New professional degrees arise with the development and standardization of new professions. Shall the new profession of religious education have its own professional degrees? The history of the older professions indicates clearly that academic standardization was an essential element in the development of professional standards. What medical colleges have done for the medical profession colleges of religious education must do for the profession of religious education. It should be made clear to all friends of this new profession that religious education is neither a mere adjunct of a theological course, nor a vocational emphasis which can be secured surreptitiously during a candidacy for the M.A. or the Ph.D. degrees.

One of the ways by which established academic degrees maintain their prestige is to discredit all newcomers who enter the academic family. Every new degree has to endure the sneers and haughty, superior demeanor of its otherwise well-bred academic neighbors. Timid souls, shrinking from the withering scorn and criticism of older disciplines, often seek to achieve well merited recognition for new disciplines by securing modifications of the requirements for the older degrees. It then comes about that the same academic gown covers a multitude of divergent and heterogeneous disciplines.

Friends of religious education have, in many cases, feared to make the fight for the recognition of their profession as a new profession worthy of special recognition and designation, and they have joined with others in an attempt to secure such a modification in the requirements for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees as will meet the vocational requirements of this new profession. In some cases the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees are being modified to meet new vocational needs; in others the special needs of a new profession are being sacrificed on the academic altar of a non-professional degree.

Boston University School of Religious Education and Social Service is a professional school in which men and women may be trained to practice this new profession with the same mastery of facts, conditions, processes and materials as men and women practice engineering, medicine, law, theology, or education.

The faculty of Boston University School of Religious Education and Social Service believes: (1) that professional interests can not be adequately expressed through the use of the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees; (2) that the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees have a distinct place as cultural and research degrees of a non-professional character, and that, as such, they will be useful to the field of religious education; (3) that the field of religious education should be recognized as a major profession, essential to the moral integrity of democracy and the perpetuity of the Church; (4) that its practice involves a technique too highly specialized to be properly included within the limitations of the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees, and that this new profession should establish for its own use new professional degrees comparable to the B.D., S.T.B., S.T.D., and Th.D. degrees of theology; and the M.D. of medicine.

It would be just as reasonable to abandon the M.D. degree for doctors of medicine and limit the medical profession to the specialization possible within the limits of the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees as it is to ask the practitioner of religious education to limit the amount and character of his specialization to the requirements of a degree which has an entirely different content and objective.

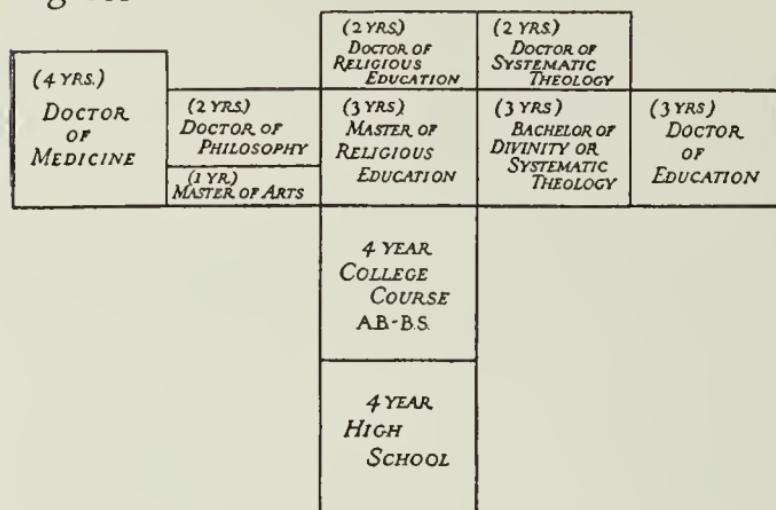
The faculty of this professional school believes that the resources of the School and the volume of specialized knowledge and technique have developed to a point which justifies the granting of the following graduate professional degrees:

MASTER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, (M.R.E.), three years beyond college graduation.

MASTER OF SOCIAL SERVICE, (M.S.Sc.), three years beyond college graduation.

DOCTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, (D.R.E.), five years beyond college graduation.

The following diagram will show the relation of the professional degrees in religious education to other academic and professional degrees:



This diagram shows that the standard graduate cultural and professional degrees rest upon a common basis of eight years of accredited high school and college work. It also shows that Boston University has placed its professional degrees in religious education on as high a plane as that of any of the older professions.

Requirements for Professional Degrees

An examination of the requirements of these professional degrees will show that they preserve the essential disciplines of the cultural degrees and add in proper sequence courses designed to give the bodies of vocational information, specialized technique, and practical skill required of a successful practitioner. (See pp 56-69 of current catalogue of Boston University School of Religious Education and Social Service.)

Students coming into these professional graduate courses will have the equivalent of a Liberal Arts college training; they will have mastered "the common elements necessary to an intelligent participation in a democratic society" and they may also have pursued certain prevocational courses which will introduce them to the more highly specialized graduate courses.

Building upon this background of culture and vocational training the professional graduate school should:

1. Give further training in methods of study and in the technique of handling "second hand" knowledge.

2. Introduce the student to the methods of research and give practice in organizing and interpreting "first-hand" knowledge, including laboratory, statistical and historical methods of research.
3. Give background, perspective and point of view for professional courses. In building this background, it will be kept in mind that all religious and social workers must have a knowledge of human nature, an insight into the nature of society, knowledge of the history, philosophy and psychology of religion, and knowledge of the church as an institution, including its history, agencies and materials.
4. Give a comprehensive acquaintance with the matter and method of specific vocations; i.e., *vocational information*.
5. Develop skill in the application of vocational knowledge to specific cases; i.e., *practitioner's skill*.

Laboratories, Clinics and Supervised Practice Work

THE very genius of this school made necessary the development of social and educational laboratories and the creation of a system of supervision in order that the theories of the class room might be exemplified in the laboratory. A clear distinction is made between practical work which is carried on merely for the purpose of illustrating a class-room lecture, and practical work which is designed to develop the pupil into a skilled practitioner. Distinction is also made between a practice school where students gain skill, and a demonstration school in which the entire process is controlled in the interest of certain educational tests, or experiments which are being carried out, not by apprentices, but by highly skilled operators.

Just as a medical college must have its clinic and its laboratories; just as an agricultural college must have its experimental station and its model farm, so this school must have a system of social and educational laboratories. The development and administration of such a system of laboratories and demonstration centers has been a major interest of the faculty of this school from the beginning. Working rules have been developed and a system of academic credit has been formulated. Laboratory manuals are in process of construction, and the technique of supervision is being standardized.

Range of Vocational Interest

THE range of vocational interest contemplated by this school is as wide as the needs and activities of the local church. Whatever types of lay-service the church or the community may demand, those types will be supplied by this school.

The present curriculum and faculty provide for specialization in the Administration of Religious Education, Young People's Work, Children's Work, College and High School Teaching, The Fine Arts in Religion, Rural and Village Church, Town and City Church, Foreign-Speaking Work, Foreign Missions, and Social Engineering. It will be the purpose of this school to respond to the needs of the church just as an engineering school responds to the needs of the country's industries, or agricultural colleges to the needs of the farmers.

Professional Atmosphere

GRADUATE students in this school breathe the atmosphere of the profession to whose practice they are to devote their lives.

Dr. A. Lawrence Lowell, president of Harvard University, in a recent address, said:

"For the success of a school founded to prepare for a new profession two things are required:

"First — That the men practising that occupation should be convinced that they are members of a profession, with a sense of solidarity, of common interests and aims, with a motive above personal profit, and a desire to promote the best preparation therefor.

"Secondly — That the school itself should have a distinct professional atmosphere of its own, so strong that from the very moment of entrance the student should feel the enthusiasm, the responsibility and the dignity of belonging to a powerful and honorable profession." (*Boston Post*, April 5, 1924).

The Evangelistic Emphasis

IT is fitting that Boston University should devote its resources to the development of a national system of religious education. Boston University is an outstanding center in America for theistic teaching.

Behavioristic psychology and pragmatism, instrumentalism, naturalism, and materialism in philosophy are profoundly influencing the academic life of America today. The biological sciences are being substituted for psychology, theology and philosophy. Already leaders of religious education are facing the problem of keeping religious education *religious*. The religious and philosophical departments of Boston University interpret their problems from the viewpoint of personalistic philosophy. This guarantees a warm evangelistic emphasis and at the same time guarantees all the values which flow from the most profound and scholarly research in the field of religious thought and experience. The output from Boston University will be free from naturalism and materialism on the one hand, and from fanaticism and obscurantism on the other hand. It is important that a movement that selects the curricula and determines the religious nurture of the childhood of a continent should have a vital religious faith, and a fundamental philosophy consistent with the great concepts of the Christian religion.

An Academic Adventure

WHEN this school was established, eight years ago, the faculty and administrative officers knew the nature of the problems which they would be called upon to solve. They were starting on an academic adventure, but they were not wholly without guides or precedents. Medical education, engineering education, public education and other kindred vocations had blazed trails ahead of them. Educational and experimental psychology had conducted research which yielded valuable by-products for religious education and social service. Guided by such precedents as were at hand, the faculty of this school has attacked its many difficult problems. From the beginning our faculty was faced with such pertinent questions as the following:

1. What are the general courses which prepare students to participate in a democratic society? Can these courses be secured at the College of Liberal Arts, the School of

Education, the School of Theology, etc., or must they be offered by a separate faculty?

2. What are the courses which best develop the spiritual life of students?
3. What specialized body of knowledge belongs to each vocation for which students are to be prepared?
4. What technical instruments are necessary for the application of the specialized knowledge of each vocation?
5. What types of organized and directed experience will produce the skill required for each vocation and how shall practice be related to theory?
6. Are there common elements which underlie many related fields of practice? If so, what are the common elements which belong to the vocations represented by this school?
7. Granted that all religious and social workers must have knowledge of human nature, an insight into the nature of society, knowledge of the history, philosophy and psychology of religion, and knowledge of the Church as an institution including its history, agencies and materials — can candidates for many vocations secure their training in the same courses?

In developing the content for courses of instruction it soon became evident that, for curriculum purposes, religious education and the various forms of social service must be regarded as fields of human endeavor which draw their data from many sciences and from many arts.

Instruction, research and propaganda are the three pressing needs of the rapidly developing fields represented by this School. Faculty members are torn by conflicting demands. The content of their courses and the future of their profession demands research; classrooms full of eager students tempt them to develop the fine art of teaching, and the demands of the field for lectures, books, etc., pull them out into promotion and propaganda. As the profession develops there will doubtless arise a division of labor which will provide specialists who restrict their efforts more or less exclusively to a single type of professional work. One needs only to glance at the catalogue of this school from year to year to be convinced that the members of the faculty are seriously at work on profound professional and academic problems which demand research, experimentation, and discriminating analysis.

Four Organizing Centers

FOR administrative purposes this school is organized around four centers as follows:

1. *Knowledge.* Certain quantities of knowledge must be mastered by the student who is to practice religious education. This required knowledge is definitely set forth in designated courses which must be mastered in proper sequence and in proper relation to laboratory and practice courses.

2. *Health.* Successful practice of any profession demands good health. Physical examinations by our school physicians reveal physical defects which students are required to correct during their course of training. Students are expected to learn how to keep themselves physically fit for hard and exacting work when they go out to their fields of service.

3. *Vocational Fitness.* This school maintains a department of vocational guidance. Each student is given personal attention by this department. Our purpose is to prevent as far as possible the placing of "square pegs in round holes." This department of vocational guidance works in conjunction with our Bureau of Appointments, thus insuring the wisest possible placement of our graduates.

4. *Personal and Spiritual Growth.* During the progress of their professional courses students of this school are stimulated to definite and continuous personal and spiritual growth. Religious leaders must have personal attributes worthy of emulation. They must have convictions that lead them to "die for the cause" which they represent. This school consciously strives to develop the personal and spiritual ideals of its students during the progress of their designated curricula courses. In this institution school spirit comes to be identical with professional spirit.

A Graduate Professional School

BOSTON University School of Religious Education and Social Service is a professional school for the fields of religious education and social service. It is to these fields what institutes of technology are to engineering;

what medical colleges are to medicine; what teachers' colleges are to education, and what schools of theology are to ministerial training. It offers professional degrees based upon standardized college courses.

Strengthening the Collegiate Background

PIONEERS in the graduate professional training of leaders in the field of religious education very soon discovered that high-grade graduate work in this field could not be done because the undergraduate courses had been unwisely selected. Graduate students in chemistry, biology, mathematics, history, sociology, etc., have pursued basic courses in their respective fields in high school and college. They are prepared for advanced graduate courses in these fields. College students entering schools of theology and schools of religious education are often very inadequately prepared for graduate work in these fields, and consequently the first courses in the graduate schools of theology and religious education are apt to be introductory courses of an undergraduate character and unworthy of graduate ranking. To obviate a similar difficulty medical colleges reached down into the college and arranged a group of pre-medical courses such as biology, bacteriology, organic chemistry, etc., which would completely satisfy collegiate demands but which would also provide the under-graduate pre-requisites upon which real graduate work could be predicated. In like manner engineering colleges wishing to strengthen their graduate work reached down into the college and arranged a group of pre-engineering courses including such subjects as physics, higher mathematics, chemistry, and geology, which satisfied the academic demands of the college but which at the same time provided an undergraduate basis upon which real graduate work could be done.

Now when college graduates entered schools of religious education for graduate work with majors in Latin, mathematics, etc., and without a single high school or col-

lege course in the Bible, ethics, metaphysics, philosophy, church history, history of religion, religious education, psychology, educational theory, sociology, history of education, etc., etc., it was very clear that such students were not prepared to do graduate work in these fields. To give them a year or two of *undergraduate work in a graduate school* and then send them out with an M.A. degree in religious education would cheapen the profession of religious education and outrage all approved academic ideals. To permit such students to enter standard graduate courses for which they have had no appropriate introductory courses, such as *philosophy of religion* without previous work in metaphysics or introduction of philosophy; or *psychology of religion* without preparatory courses in general psychology; or *Introduction to Johannine Problems* without previous courses in Biblical History and Literature — would tend to lower the academic standards of the courses into which such students were admitted, and result in superficial and unsatisfactory work on the part of such students. There was but one proper course to pursue, namely: to follow the precedent of colleges of medicine, colleges of engineering and colleges of other professions and *reach down into the undergraduate field for the purposes of strengthening the graduate field*. Accordingly the School of Religious Education and Social Service established its own undergraduate college in which college students may pursue pre-religious education courses in Bible, metaphysics, philosophy, ethics, psychology, education, etc., along with their language, history, science, literature and the other disciplines of the standard college courses.

After a very careful analysis of the requirements for baccalaureate degrees in the standard colleges of America, the faculty of this school has adopted standards for a baccalaureate which fully meet the academic and cultural requirements of the historic Bachelor of Arts degree and at the same time provide that insight into the fields of religion and social science which will be required of those who are to be leaders in the church work of the future. Just as the Bachelor of Science de-

gree provides the essential liberal cultural courses with a group of rich courses in physical and biological sciences, so the Bachelor of Religious Education and the Bachelor of Social Science degrees provide all the essentials of the historic baccalaureate plus an introduction to the fields of religion and social science which will furnish rich background for graduate work in these fields. This school feels justified in maintaining its high and exacting requirements for its baccalaureate degrees because all of its students are preparing for some form of Christian or social service in which they will be the leaders and spiritual guides of men and women in all of the other vocations and professions. A further analysis of the baccalaureate degrees offered by this school may be found on pages 43-45, of its current catalogue.

Persons who are looking forward to professional work in the fields of religion or social service should be guided into a selection of those courses in the undergraduate years which will give a wide range of discipline and provide a background for future graduate work in their chosen fields of service.

The graduate degrees of this school are *professional* degrees; its baccalaureate degrees are *cultural* degrees.

Rapid Growth of School

THE phenomenal growth in the student body of this school has justified its faculty in the creation and maintenance of high academic standards and rigid professional requirements. The progressive student wishes to go to the top of his profession. He is not satisfied with short courses. This augurs well for the future of this new profession. The following record of the growth in the enrolment of this school tells its own story.

1918-19	105
1919-20	208
1920-21	310
1921-22	311
1922-23	369
1923-24	425
1924-25	474
1925-26	504

The present student body comes from 38 states and 8 foreign countries and represents 22 Protestant Christian denominations.

This is a Christian School with an inter-denominational spirit and program.

Part of a Great Metropolitan University

THIS school is an integral part of a great metropolitan university with more than 10,000 students annually and more than 500 members in its various faculties. This school is one of nine schools constituting Boston University. It has its own faculty, buildings, student body, and it is related to the University just as the College of Liberal Arts, the School of Medicine, the School of Law, the School of Theology and the other schools and colleges comprising the University.

This school is devoting its efforts to the development of religious education as a profession. It believes that the requirements for this profession should be as high or higher than those of any other profession. To this end it has (1) strengthened and enriched the undergraduate requirements, and (2) developed long, exacting graduate courses with clinic and laboratory facilities leading to degrees which are distinctive of the field of religious education and equal in content and requirements to other standardized professional degrees.

In order that it may more fully realize its ideals it is seeking to increase its endowment and strengthen its material equipment. Eight years of successful work have demonstrated the practicability of its program and standards. Its resources should be greatly strengthened by friends of religious education who share the ideals set forth in this brochure.

For complete catalogue, or other information regarding this school address

Dean WALTER S. ATHEARN

Boston University School of Religious
Education and Social Service

20 Beacon Street
Boston, Mass.

The Battle Ground of the Next Decade

"IN the early history of our American school system, we borrowed much of our educational machinery and method from Europe; in recent years we have been importing European and Oriental philosophies of education. There is great danger that we shall build the educational program of our new democracy upon a philosophy which will in the end accomplish the undoing of democracy. There is urgent need for the restudy of the philosophy of democracy, the philosophy of religion, and especially the philosophy of the Christian religion, and for the building of an educational philosophy which will fittingly express the ideals of a democratic and spiritually minded people. I am convinced that the battle ground in the field of religious education for the next decade will not be in the field of organization and methodology, but in the field of educational theory."—From *A National System of Education*, by WALTER S. ATHEARN.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

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